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PSC 321H.01: Politics of Western Europe

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PSC 321H: Politics of Western Europe

Political Science 321H
Fall 2006
MWF 10:10-11:00
LA 106
Course Website: <http://courseware.umn.edu>
Course Blog: <http://psc321.blogspot.com>

Professor Eric Hines
Office: 355 LA
Office Hours: 9:00-10:00 MWF
1:00-2:00 WF
2:00-4:00 TH
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Course Description

This course introduces students to the postwar history, culture, and politics of Western Europe. It begins with a *comparative* study of national politics and postwar political development. Students will gain a familiarity with the factors that explain the different political and economic outcomes we observe in Western European states. Some of the factors we will examine include social cleavages, political institutions (e.g., electoral systems, regime types, and federalism), party systems, and interest groups. The course concludes with an examination of European political development since 1945. Students will gain insight into the challenges a united Europe faces at the dawn of the 21st Century. Some of the topics we will explore include European integration, Muslim immigration, and economic globalization.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Use comparative analysis and causal reasoning to explain political phenomena.
- Evaluate the comparative effectiveness of democratic institutions.
- Understand the motivations of and constraints imposed on European political actors.
- Evaluate European political development within different historical and cultural frameworks.

Textbooks

There are three required books for this course available for purchase at the UC Bookstore:

Gallagher, Michael, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair. 2006. *Representative Government in Modern Europe*. New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 007297706X

Hitchcock, William. 2004. *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent 1945 to the Present*. New York: Anchor Books. ISBN: 0385497997

Reid, T.R. 2004. *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*. New York: Penguin Books. ISBN: 0143036084

Student Responsibilities

1. Students have the responsibility to attend class regularly and complete all assigned readings before coming to class.
2. Students have the responsibility to inform the instructor beforehand of any reasons why they are unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time.
3. Students have the responsibility to complete all assignments by the deadline given by the instructor.
4. Students have the responsibility to complete the requirements of this course within the time framework of the semester. University policy on incompletes will be adhered to strictly.

Instructor Responsibilities

1. The instructor will provide an environment where all students' opinions are encouraged and respected.
2. The instructor will provide information in a way that is accessible and relevant to students.

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3. The instructor will design assessments that accurately reflect the objectives of this course.
4. The instructor will make all necessary and reasonable efforts to facilitate student learning.
5. The instructor will provide opportunities for students to anonymously provide feedback regarding his success at meeting these responsibilities.

Course Organization

This is primarily a lecture course. Lecture slides and outlines, and other course material will be available from the University's Blackboard shell for this course (<http://courseware.umd.edu>). Students are also expected to read and participate on the course's blog: <http://psc321.blogspot.com>.

Course Requirements

One-Minute Papers: Students will need to purchase a bluebook to complete this requirement.

When appropriate, students will provide "immediate feedback" by answering two questions in a bluebook at the end of a class: "What major conclusions did you draw?" and "What questions remain in your mind?" Student responses will be collected and returned with instructor comments at the beginning of the next class. This feedback helps me evaluate the progress of the class and the effectiveness of my teaching, gives students an opportunity to synthesize the major ideas of a class, and allows students to ask me questions at any time.

Question Time

Each Friday, we will adopt the parliamentary practice of "Question Time" by holding "Professor's Question Time." Students must submit a question for me each Wednesday by 5:00 p.m. on a Blackboard discussion board as part of their participation grade. Guidelines for the questions are posted on Blackboard. The best questions will be submitted to a vote on Blackboard each Thursday. Friday lectures will be comprised of answers to each week's five top-rated questions and any question asked by 1/6 of the class.

Homework

Students will be given a number of homework assignments during the semester. These assignments are designed to prepare students for the election simulation and the final paper. Homework assignments will be distributed on Fridays and will be due in class the following Friday.

German Election Simulation

This simulation will give you first-hand experience with a PR electoral system and the process of forming a government coalition in a multi-party system. It will also reinforce many of the basic concepts needed to understand European politics from a comparative perspective. Detailed instructions on the simulation will be distributed in class and on the course website. Students will be required to write a reaction paper after the simulation that will double as a take-home examination over the first section of the class.

Final Paper

Students will write a 6-8 page analysis paper on a political phenomena of their choice contingent on instructor approval. The paper will require students to apply one of the comparative methods discussed in the course to their phenomena in order to provide an explanation for variation across Western Europe. The paper will require substantial library research. The full guidelines for the final paper will be distributed in class. The papers will be due in class on a date (Nov. 17 or Nov. 20) chosen by a class vote on Blackboard.

Student Assessment and Exams

Student assessment for this course is intended to measure how well students are achieving the course objectives listed above. Since those objectives deal with a synthesis of knowledge rather than its regurgitation, assessment will occur in a number of non-exam formats including homework, a highly structured reaction paper written after the election simulation and your final paper. There is one traditional essay examination, a final exam held during finals week on Wednesday, December 13 at 8:00 am.

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Final Grade

The final grade will be based on a 1000 points distributed across six different areas as follows:

Participation:	150 points [Including one-minute papers, Question Time, and in-class participation]
Homework:	150 points
Election Simulation:	100 points [50 points for group participation, 50 points for individual participation]
Reaction Paper:	250 points
Final Paper:	250 points
Final Exam:	200 points

The plus/minus grading system will be used based on the following scale:

93-100	A	90-93	A-	87-90	B+	83-87	B
80-83	B-	77-80	C+	73-77	C	70-73	C-
67-70	D+	63-67	D	60-63	D-	0-60	F

Additional Readings

In addition to the three textbooks listed above, students will be required to read a handful of additional readings which are available via the Internet, through the Mansfield Library's Electronic Reserves, or Blackboard.

Laver, Michael and Norman Schofield. 1998. "Locating Political Parties on Empirical Policy Scales." In *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 245-266

Kagen, Robert. 2002. "Power and Weakness." *Policy Review* 113 (June/July): pgs. 3-28.

Sapir, André. 2005. "Globalisation And The Reform Of European Social Models" *Bruegel Policy Brief* 2005 (1): 1-8

Savage, Timothy M. 2004. "Europe and Islam: Crescent Waxing, Cultures Clashing" *Washington Quarterly* 27 (3): 25-50.

Course Schedule

I. Introduction

August 28	Introduction
August 30	What Makes Europe Different?
Sept. 1	Library Research Strategies (No Class)

Gallagher, Chapter 1, pgs. 1-23
Blackboard Tutorial — No Class

II. Representative Government in Western Europe

Sept. 6	Executives (Governments)
Sept. 8	Legislatures (Parliaments)
Sept. 11	Constitutions
Sept. 13	Levels of Governance
Sept. 15	Question Time
Sept. 18	Party Politics & Party Systems
Sept. 20	Party Families
Sept. 22	Question Time
Sept. 25	Cleavage Structures
Sept. 27	Elections and Electoral Systems
Sept. 29	Question Time

Gallagher, Chapter 2, pgs. 24-56
 Gallagher, Chapter 3, pgs. 57-87
 Gallagher, Chapter 4, 86-112
 Gallagher, Chapter 6, 154-185

 Gallagher, Chapter 7, pgs. 187-227
 Gallagher, Chapter 8, pgs. 230-260
 Laver and Schofield, "Locating," pgs. 245-266
 Gallagher, Chapter 9, pgs. 263-303
 Gallagher, Chapter 11, pgs. 340-377

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Oct. 2	Making and Breaking Governments	Gallagher, Chapter 12, pgs. 381-419
Oct. 4	Does Representative Government Matter?	Gallagher, Chapter 13, pgs. 422-438
Oct. 6	<i>Question Time</i>	
Oct. 9	Politics Inside Parties	Gallagher, Chapter 10, pgs. 307-335
Oct. 11	Politics Outside Parliament	Gallagher, Chapter 14, pgs. 441-463
Oct. 13	<i>Question Time</i>	
Oct. 16	German Election Simulation	
Oct. 18	German Election Simulation	
Oct. 20	German Election Simulation	
III. Historical Development of European Political Systems from 1945-1992		
Oct. 23	The Postwar Settlement I	Hitchcock, Chapter 2, pgs. 40-68
Oct. 25	The Postwar Settlement II	Hitchcock, Chapter 3, pgs. 69-97
Oct. 27	<i>Question Time</i>	Simulation Reaction Paper Due in Class
Oct. 30	Europe's Economic Miracle	Hitchcock, Chapter 5, p. 127-161
Nov. 1	De Gaulle and the End of Empire.	Hitchcock, Chapters 6 & 8, pgs. 162-192, 221-241
Nov. 3	<i>Question Time</i>	
Nov. 6	Prosperity and its Discontents	Hitchcock, Chapters 9 & 10, pgs. 243-287
Nov. 8	Margaret Thatcher	Hitchcock, Chapter 12, pgs. 311-341
Nov. 13	The Balkans	Hitchcock, Chapter 14, pgs. 380-409
Nov. 15	The European Union: Origins and Institutions	Hitchcock, Chapter 16, pgs. 435-464 Reid, Chapter 2, pgs. 26-62
Nov. 17	<i>Question Time</i>	
IV. Challenges in Contemporary European Politics		
Nov. 20	Is there a European Pop Culture?	Reid, Chapter 8, pgs. 197-226
Nov. 27	Who is European?	Hitchcock, Chapter 15, pgs. 410-434
Nov. 29	What is the Future of Islam in Europe?	Savage, "Europe and Islam," pgs. 25-50
Dec. 1	<i>Question Time</i>	
Dec. 4	Can the European Social Model Survive Globalization?	Sapir, "Globalisation", pgs. 1-8 Reid, Chapter 6, pgs. 143-176
Dec. 6	What Is the Future of the Transatlantic Partnership?	Kagen, "Power and Weakness." pgs. 3-28
V. Conclusion		
Dec. 8	<i>Question Time</i>	
Final Exam	Wed. Dec. 13.	8:00-10:00 AM